

## ***Celebrate America with Symbols from American Memory***

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Since the tragic events of September 11, flags, ribbons, banners, and other patriotic symbols have been displayed everywhere. Our lesson, inspired by this tragedy, evolved as a way to help students understand how these symbols came to represent the spirit of America. We wanted students not only to examine the past, but also to consider what being an American means to each of them.

### **How Did We Get Started?**

[GetTech Day](http://www.gettech.org/) (<http://www.gettech.org/>) is a campaign organized by the National Association of Manufacturers to help prepare students for the technology-driven jobs of tomorrow. It was launched locally on October 2, 2001. All area schools were invited to participate. Fyle School decided to focus on getting acquainted with the world's largest (and best) online library and scrapbook of American history. We called our day "Celebrate America With American Memory." To help teachers navigate the huge resources of American Memory, Gail designed a web page linking to easy-to-use elementary-level activities and lessons: [Celebrate America With American Memory](http://www.rhnet.org/library_links.cfm?cat=4&onesubcat=75&subsub=272&category=Elementary%20Library%20Pages) ([http://www.rhnet.org/library\\_links.cfm?cat=4&onesubcat=75&subsub=272&category=Elementary%20Library%20Pages](http://www.rhnet.org/library_links.cfm?cat=4&onesubcat=75&subsub=272&category=Elementary%20Library%20Pages)). Teachers were encouraged to choose several activities appropriate for their grade level and have fun exploring the sites.

Gail also compiled and distributed a packet of sample printed documents from the collection and included photo and document analysis worksheets for classroom use. Teachers were encouraged to design their own American

Memory classroom activities and to access American Memory during their computer lab classes. Finally, Gail invited any interested classes to visit the Library for a large screen online Library of Congress tour.

### **How Did the Symbols Lesson Work?**

As a classroom teacher, Doris wanted to familiarize her fifth-grade students with the American Memory treasures on GetTech Day. She prepared for the lesson by searching the AM collections, locating the patriotic symbols in the box on page 3, printing them, affixing them to red and blue paper, and then laminating them.

Doris developed a worksheet for students to use as they analyzed the symbols (see worksheet on



**"Celebrate America With American Memory" hall display near the library at Fyle Elementary.**